

TOWN OF MONTGOMERY
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CONSERVATION COMMISSION (MCC) MEETING (unapproved draft)
WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2023

The meeting was called to order at the Public Safety Building (PSB) by Carissa Stein at 5:37 p.m. There was also a Zoom link set up for those unable to attend in person.

Attendance: Patrick Calecas, Joan Hildreth, Parma Jewett, John Kuryloski, Lynn Locher, Matt Paggi, Karen Stanley, Carissa Stein, Sue Wilson (Sue attended via Zoom, but had to leave Zoom session early). Absent: Susan Baker.

Visitors: None.

Additions/Deletions/Changes to Agenda – Carissa spoke to Town Librarian, Marlene, re: adding to the library’s Conservation Corner; there will be further discussion about this in the near future. John offered to provide the library with copies of Northern Woodlands Magazine. Also, Karen provided ten \$25.00 gas cards which her employer, Jolley, donated to the MCC to offer as gifts to presenters and to other volunteers as the MCC sees fit. Everyone is very appreciative of this generous donation, and a thank you note will be sent.

Minutes 4/5/23– Sue made a motion, seconded by Lynn, to approve the April 5th minutes. The motion passed unanimously; the April 5, 2023 minutes were approved.

Budget/Treasurer’s Report/CD Update – Patrick stated that the balance was not currently available, but he plans to meet with Erin, Town Treasurer, soon to review the status of MCC-related invoices and the CD which is maturing next month, as well as to obtain balance info.

EVENTS/PROJECTS:

PLANNED:

- Green Up Day (GUD) May 6th– Parma reported that everything is set. Green bags have been made available at the library and on the village green, and many of them have already been picked up by community members in preparation for the 6th. Parma and Jackie Doyle are making homemade baked goods and will be providing beverages which will be available at the Town Garage for participants at 10:30 a.m. on GUD.

- Tree Sale Pickup at PSB 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on May 6th – Carissa, Patrick & Matt will do the tree pickup. Franklin County Natural Resource Conservation District (FCNRCD) is spearheading other logistics re: the sale. The trees for the Town, which will be planted the following week, will be stored at Titus Presler’s barn.

-Knotweed Control/Brush Hogging Montgomery Town Land: Contractor Hire

Carissa shared the proposals from the two contractors who responded to the Request for Proposal (RFP). She also reported that she had the opportunity to meet with each of them on the property. All agreed that there were two excellent options, and that either one would do a great job. After discussion, it was agreed that, because both are definitely qualified, it would make sense to go with the lower bid. Patrick made a motion, seconded by Parma, to accept the bid of Avery Stanley dated 5/3/23. Karen recused herself from the discussion and vote out of concern re: potential conflict of interest. With the exception of Karen abstaining from the vote, the motion passed unanimously by those

in attendance. Carissa noted that there will be a tarp at the property designated for debris from cleaning the equipment utilized.

-Fruit/Nut Plant Tree Planting & Knowing Knotweed Event –

1. Marking Trees, Tree Layout, Planting Protocol - Carissa distributed the planting plan which she developed, and all agreed that it looked great. She showed everyone the colored pin flags, colored masking tape, and bamboo tags which will be used. Parking arrangements and the procedure for planting were discussed, as well as the need for two tables and two tents and their proposed locations. One of the tables will be for knotweed info. Carissa said that Sarita Khan will not be able attend in-person to share perspectives on knotweed, but she hopes that written materials will be provided for attendees. Carissa plans to do initial flagging of the property on May 9th or 10th. There was also discussion re: the use of beneficial root dip and clover as part of the tree planting process.

2. MES Planting: May 11th/12th Carissa is in communication with Sandy, the MES Principal, re: which of the dates, the 11th or 12th, will work for the school to do planting.

3. Community Planting May 13th from 10-2 - This event has been promoted through various channels, but thus far not many community members have signed up. More posters will be distributed and there will be reminders on social media. Parma has agreed to make goodies for the event.

- Birding Events with Bridget Butler Co-Sponsored by ECC, MCC and RCC –

- Carissa reported that the Oodles of Noodles with Timberdoodles event on April 16th in Richford was well-attended by people from Montgomery and surrounding communities.

- Slow Birding May 20th Richford Elementary School – Joan will check with Annette Goyne of RCC to see if this is full. If not, the MCC will do additional promotion.

- Collaboration with the MES and FCNRCD for Town Forest (TF) BioBlitz June 8th (Rain Date June 9th) and Community Event June 10th (Rain Date June 11th)-

Plans are set for June 8th (or 9th, if rain date is needed) for this event with the MES. Students, teachers, FCNRCD, as well as various experts, will be in attendance. This event is being funded by a grant which FCNRCD received from Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers - Wild and Scenic (UMATR)/Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA). Carissa reported that the agenda is pretty well set and she will send it to the other members of the MCC. The first event will be followed by a community event on June 10th (with a rain date of the 11th), from 10-2, where community members can hear about what the students found/learned. FCNRCD is a partner and they will develop a flyer to help with promotion of the event.

- Farmer's Market – MCC booth: July 1, August 5, September 2 – There was discussion re: MCC member availability on those dates, and it appears that there is an adequate number of volunteers.

PROPOSED/DISCUSSION:

-Town Forest:

1. Selectboard Approval – Carissa plans to attend the Selectboard meeting on May 15th to provide an overview of the Sinuosity report as well as a summary of the information gathered through the meetings which have occurred, or will in the near future, with potential trail builders.

2. Contractor Estimates Matt has been in contact with potential contractors for trail building and he arranged a site visit with Kory Buck from OTB Trail Builders which

occurred on 5/2/23. Most members of the TF Subcommittee (Carissa, Patrick and Joan) were in attendance along with Matt. It was reported to be a productive meeting, and Kory plans to develop a proposal. Matt has also been in contact with Josh Ryan of Timber and Stone, and plans to set something up with him soon. Joan will send Matt information on other trail builders who have done work in the area, too.

- Black Falls Farm with Mary Niles – After discussion, it was agreed that Parma would get in touch with Mary to ask her for potential dates for a visit to her farm. The hope is that this can be arranged for some time over the summer.

-Budget & Proposal for Three Holes Trail Improvement and Bench – Tabled until next meeting.

-Ideas for Future Events (Autumn):

1. Ben Maddox “I See Fish People”

2. Ben Kilham – Bear Rehabilitator –

3. Co-creating Montgomery – Sharing What We Experience and Love

All discussion re: the above ideas for events was tabled until next meeting.

Matt made a motion, seconded by Patrick, to adjourn at 7:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously by all in attendance.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Hildreth